**PRESS RELEASE**

Skyriders assists power station in repairing 60-m-high downpipes

*08 October, 2012: Specialist rope access solutions provider Skyriders has assisted a large power generation plant in Limpopo in repairing downpipe infrastructure, located inside the six units, more than 60 m above ground.*

Skyriders marketing manager **Mike Zinn** notes that a total of six power station units required repairs to their downpipe's joints. "The joints and the sealant had been installed more than 20 years ago, and was therefore old, brittle and failing. During heavy rains, water in certain areas leaked onto electrical plant components causing maintenance challenges."

Zinn highlights the fact that the downpipes ran from the roof of the power station units down through the power station building in a zigzag formation into the ground. "This was a highly challenging job, as it was almost like a maze. The Skyriders team of rope access technicians were responsible for accessing and inspecting all areas, before taking photos, removing the old sealants, cleaning it up, installing new sealants and taking more photos," he continues.

In total, 255 joints were repaired by June 1, 2012, more than two weeks ahead of the client's stated deadline. Zinn adds: "Although the scope of work was relatively simple, the access constraints with regards to height, confined spaces and a fully operational plant made for a challenging work environment. The team did an excellent job from a planning and execution point of view. We explained to the client that rope access was a far quicker and more cost effective method than scaffolding, and this method ensured that the Skyriders team was able to seal the 400 mm pipes from the 30 m level to the 60 m level in 26 days."

What's more, Zinn points out that all six power station units remained fully operational throughout the project. "Skyriders' scope of the project was to undertake structural inspection and repairs of the downpipes without creating any costly disruptions whatsoever. As a result, the team had to make sure that ropes were never anywhere close to the conveyors and any other moving parts. Due to an abundance of structural steel onsite, the team was able to access all six power station units from above, thereby reducing the risk of any safety issues and potential disruption."

Although the project has proven to be an overwhelming success, Zinn does admit that the downpipes will have to be checked regularly to ensure that the sealant remains effective ."Heavy rains create a lot of dirt in piping systems, and Skyriders is committed to continually undertaking regular site visits to ensure that the sealant remains effective any type of weather conditions."

With a zero-fatality record spanning more than 22 years, Skyriders has developed a reputation of being the leading provider of rope access-aided inspection, non-destructive testing (NDT) and maintenance-related services to the South African power generation industry. Looking to the future, Zinn is optimistic that the company can expand its industry leading expertise to power stations across the African continent.

“Scaffolding has proven to be the tried-and-trusted method for above-ground applications in the African industry over the decades. However, in industries such as power generation, rope is a far more efficient means of gaining access to a particular high elevation section of a site, as installation is considerably faster and cheaper, while technicians are provided with more flexibility and safety. With this in mind, I believe that Skyriders has placed itself in a strong position to gain market share in the African power generation sector in the long term future," he concludes.

***Ends***

**Notes to the Editor**There are numerous photographs specific to this press release. Please visit <http://media.ngage.co.za> and click the Skyriders link.

**About Skyriders**Skyriders (Pty) Ltd, established in 1988, is a leader in the South African rope access industry, providing cost- and time-saving solutions to clients in the power generation and petrochemical industries who require rope access aided inspection, NDT and maintenance work to be done in difficult to reach, high-up locations.

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